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Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 13886 131421Z

53
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 IO-13 ACDA-10 OMB-01 /092 W
---------- 045538
R 131341Z OCT 76
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7826
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

UNCLAS CAIRO 13886

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN REACTION TO SYRIA'S SIDON OFFENSIVE
1. OFFICIAL EGYPTIAN REACTION TO SYRIAN PUSH TOWARD SIDON WAS SHARP AND IMMEDIATE. FONMIN FAHMY ANNOUNCED SADAT HAD RECEIVED PHONE CALL EVENING OCT. 12 FROM ARAFAT EXPLAINING THE NATURE OF THE OFFENSIVE WHICH, ACCORDING TO FAHMY, IS CLEARLY AIMED AT CREATING A FAIT ACCOMPLI BEFORE OCT. 18 SUMMIT. FAHMY ADDED EGYPT TOTALLY DENOUNCES SYRIAN OFFENSIVE, WHICH IT REGARDS AS FLAGRANT CHALLENGE TO ARAB HEADS OF STATE.

2. GOE "RESPONSIBLE SOURCES" EXPRESSED "ASTONISHMENT" OVER STATEMENT BY AL REP AL-KHULI TO EFFECT THAT HE EXPECTS PROGRESS IN SHTURA DESPITE SYRIAN ACTION. SAME SOURCES CLAIM THAT CAIRO AND OTHER ARAB CAPITALS HAD RECEIVED INFORMATION THAT SUCH SYRIAN "INVASION" WOULD TAKE PLACE 48 HOURS BEFORE ARAB FONMINS ASSEMBLED IN CAIRO AND THAT SYRIA'S LACK OF RESPONSE TO INVITATION TO SUMMIT "CLARIEIS DIMENSIONS OF SYRIAN PLOT."
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3 EGYPTIAN PRESS VERSION OF FIGHTING HAS 1500 SYRIAN SOLIDERS SUPPORTED BY TANKS FIGHTING AT ENTRANCE TO CITY OF SIDON ON THEIR WAY TO WEST BEIRUT, WHERE SARG INTENDS WIPE OUT "LAST BASTION" OF NATIONALIST AND PALESTINIAN FORCES. PRESS CLAIMS NATIONALIST/PALESTINIAN FORCES HAVE COME UNDER ISRAELI ARTILLERY FIRE IN SOUTH LEBANON.

4. AHRAM'S LEAD EDITORIAL CHARGED LATEST SYRIAN OPERATION IS AIMED NOT ONLY AT DISCIPLINING PALESTINIANS BUT ALSO AT LIEQUIDATING LEBANON.
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